



The Supreme Court of the US Rulings You Didn’t Hear About: The Reign of White Supremacy and Private Property in America*

June 28, 2013 by kryz, <http://decolonizechris.wordpress.com/>, *Below are selected excerpts from this long article due to space constraints*
My head has been swirling with the various, pivotal issues upon which the conservative Roberts Court struck down its gavel this month. Voting rights. Affirmative action. The Patenting of Life. Indigenous Sovereignty. Housing Development. And, oh yeah. Marriage “equality.”
Not entirely familiar with everything on this abbreviated list? You’re not alone. After all, there were a considerable number of issues, all arbitrated by a mere nine people that make up this country’s judicial branch. A mere nine people who adjudicate rulings that govern a breathtaking jurisdiction: the entire united states** and its colonial “possessions,” over 300 million people. [...]

Colorblind Racism and the Tradition of White Supremacy

1) Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin (June 24) [AKA Affirmative Action Ruling]
Verdict: Universities will need to showcase evidence race is a “necessary” component in their admissions policy that can’t be achieved by any other means. [...]
In this ruling, the common admissions practice of factoring in race will now be regulated by a vague notion of “good faith.” Universities will now need, if ever pressed, to showcase evidence that it is “necessary” to factor in applicants’ race “to achieve the educational benefits of diversity.” Blanketed under this cover of multiculturalism is a blatant ignorance of politics and history—a perfect ruse for the neoliberal white supremacist state. And so farther thus we go from the promise of a truly liberatory and equitable education.

2) Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl (June 25) [AKA Native Sovereignty Ruling]
Verdict: A Cherokee father who has appealed for custody of his daughter under the Indian Child Welfare Act—a legislative attempt to preserve the integrity of indigenous sovereignty—has no parental claims above those of the white couple trying to adopt.
This ruling, which dealt a significant imperialist blow to indigenous sovereignty, got little media coverage outside race-focused news and policy agency Colorlines and the Rachel Maddow Show.
[...] However, it is the long-term implications of this ruling that are truly disheartening. The concept of indigenous sovereignty, or the rudimentary rationales that prompt a need for tribal preservation, never emerged in the ruling. The centuries of genocidal barbarism and destruction of countless First Nation societies, cultures, and languages were never discussed. And the dismissive attitude of the majority side towards Veronica’s claim to indigenous ancestry—that “she is 1.2% (3/256) Cherokee”—makes apparent the undergirding Amerikkkanist notion of race that guides the notion of how a child should be categorized. Indeed, as if to chastise her colleagues for their substral racism, dissenting Justice Sotomayor felt compelled to mention the “majority’s repeated, analytically unnecessary references to the fact that Baby Girl is 3/256 Cherokee.”

Yet little is said about the rights of Cherokees, First Nation peoples, and the threat this ruling poses to further white adoptions to tribal integrity. Such is the violence of the white supremacist state.

3) Shelby County v. Holder (June 25) [AKA Voting Rights Act Ruling]
Verdict: The preclearance requirements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, imposed on certain states to curb discriminatory policies in voter registration, are no longer constitutional.

Although I don’t equate voting in corporation-hijacked elections “liberation,” we should nevertheless call this for what it is: a shameless coup on black and Latino self-determination. If appeal efforts prove unsuccessful, this blatant evisceration of Voting Rights Act of 1965 (sections 4 and 5) will surely go down in infamy Using a logic that is very much aligned with a conservative Court (even with the presence of two non-white bodies, Clarence Thomas and Sonia Sotomayor), a decision was made to eliminate the “preclearance” requirements of states deemed culpable of discriminatory registration practices in the Civil Rights Era. [...] Throughout the centuries, racism has mutated and morphed in various ways. White people who assert “colorblindness” are doing little more than perpetuate a complicity in (post)colonial violence in the age of global neoliberalism. [Several other court cases were not able to be included] **Editor’s Note: Original title used “Amerikkka”, changed to prevent rejection*

United States v. Windsor [AKA Repeal of DOMA, Defense of Marriage Act]

LGBTQ people reacted to the repeal of the federal Defense of Marriage Act in a variety of ways: indifference, celebration, annoyance, joy. Black & Pink free-world Leadership Circle would like to hear your opinions about all of these court decisions, and the George Zimmerman verdict on page 7!

Excerpted from *Why I’ll Never Get Married: On DOMA, Assimilation, and Pink Capitalism* on <http://decolonizechris.wordpress.com/>:
“As a queer person of color, I simply don’t relate at all to the movement for marriage equality. Listening to and observing people’s reactions that confirm their deep-seated longings and acceptance for marriage, I can’t help but feel ever-more marginalized as the expansive scope of mainstream neoliberalism accepts more of this post-modern petty-bourgeoisie into its yoke. [...] As someone sympathetic to anarcho-communist principles, such as State-less self-governance and the universal democratization of all human relations, I find marriage to be an extremely conservative institution, an oppressive relic of our sexist and colonial Judeo-Christian heritage. I fear that this latest ruling’s expansion of definitional marriage will only perpetuate an oppressive notion that the State has legal authority to sanction (i.e. “bless”) a particular, two-person relationship with exclusive

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benefits that would not be available to other, variably arranged relationships (e.g. polyamorous relationships, co-habiting non-spousal family members, non-romantic friends). If nothing else, a widespread legalization and proliferation of same-sex marriages would only deepen, and hence further the normalization and acceptability of, its significance in dominant society.”
Excerpted from *What the DOMA Ruling Means for LGBT Families of Color* on Colorlines.com: “The Supreme Court’s Defense of Marriage Act decision Wednesday is a major victory for the economic justice of LGBT Americans of color. That’s because LGBT couples of color have higher rates of poverty and are more likely to have children in their household than white LGBT couples. Consequently, LGBT couples need the financial shot in the arm that the legal recognition of marriage can give. Today’s ruling will help to ensure that some of America’s neediest couples receive it. Marriage—through over 1,000 legal benefits—provides couples recognized by the law key economic benefits. The New York Times calculates that these can total close to \$500,000 over the course of a couple’s lifetime. These include more than \$200,000 in health benefits and almost \$100,000 in social security benefits. LGBT couples need these economic advantages more than almost anyone else.”

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Statement of Purpose

Black & Pink is an open family of LGBTQ prisoners and “free world” allies who support each other. Our work toward the abolition of the prison industrial complex is rooted in the experience of currently and formerly incarcerated people. We are outraged by the specific violence of the prison industrial complex against LGBTQ people, and respond through advocacy, education, direct service, and organizing.

About this Newspaper

Since 2007, Black & Pink free world volunteers have pulled together a monthly newspaper primarily composed of material written by our family’s incarcerated members. In response to letters we receive, more prisoners receive the newspaper each issue! This month, the newspaper is being sent to: **2,800** prisoners!

Disclaimer:

Please note that the ideas and opinions expressed in the Black & Pink Newspaper are solely those of the authors and artists and do not necessarily reflect the views of Black & Pink. Black & Pink makes no representations as to the accuracy of any statements made in the Newspaper, including but not limited to legal and medical information. Authors and artists bear sole responsibility for their work.

Call for Submissions to New Erotica Zine!

Seeking erotic short stories and poems by Black & Pink incarcerated and free-world family members for a new ‘zine. Please send submissions (3 handwritten pages max) to our Black & Pink - Gabrielle. This is a voluntary project, and no money will be offered for submissions, but you might get the chance to share your spicy story with many others! To subscribe to receive erotica, write to our new address, Black & Pink - Erotica.

A Message from Jason

Dear friends,

As this newspaper goes out we will be a couple weeks passed the not guilty verdict involving George Zimmerman. The outrage at the verdict is appropriate and important for mobilizing communities to take action against the constant devaluing of Black lives. We know, however, that a guilty verdict would not have brought any real justice either. We know that prisons do not make us safer. We know that concrete walls and iron doors are not solving our community problems. As a family of abolitionists we know that the system is not broken, it functions exactly like it intends to. The courts, the police, the judges, the jailers, and all other cogs in the machine continue their rolls in making the system work. Yet the question remains, what do we do now? How do we get justice for Trayvon Martin? How do we get justice for all the young people of color targeted by police and neighborhood watch groups? What different ideas can you think of? Can you write up ideas and share them with us to print in the newspaper?

As I re-write this letter I am joining the thousands of prisoners who are on hunger strike in a solidarity fast. A group of us have been encouraging people who are not incarcerated and those who cannot engage in the hunger strike to participate one day a week. When we feel hunger in our bellies it functions as a reminder to engage in action, to send prayers, to write letters, to organize with our friends and support the efforts of those putting their lives on the line. For those members of Black and Pink who are on hunger strike, we stand with you and the fight will continue until all the demands are met. Prisoners throughout California are resisting. The first day there were 30,000 people who refused meals. This is the largest known hunger strike in history. I am amazed by the power of people inside and inspired to build on these efforts. The fight may have started by prisoners in solitary confinement, but it is a fight by all people locked behind bars, for all people regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, class, or housing status. Resistance and organizing makes us stronger!



This month is recognized by many as Black August. Black August is the radical alternative to February as Black History Month. Black August celebrates the history of resistance and liberation from Black communities. August was chosen because it highlights some of the greatest moments in Black resistance. August 22nd is the anniversary of the Haitian revolution. This revolution was led and organized by over 100,000 slaves on the colonized Island known at the time as Saint Domingue. Haiti was a colony of France and was one of the largest producers of coffee and sugar for France and Britain. The island was heavily populated with Black people held in slavery, nearly half a million. The brutal treatment fed resistance and Haiti is the only example of a country that formed it’s independence through a slave rebellion as they squashed the French colonists, outlawed slavery, and formed their own country.

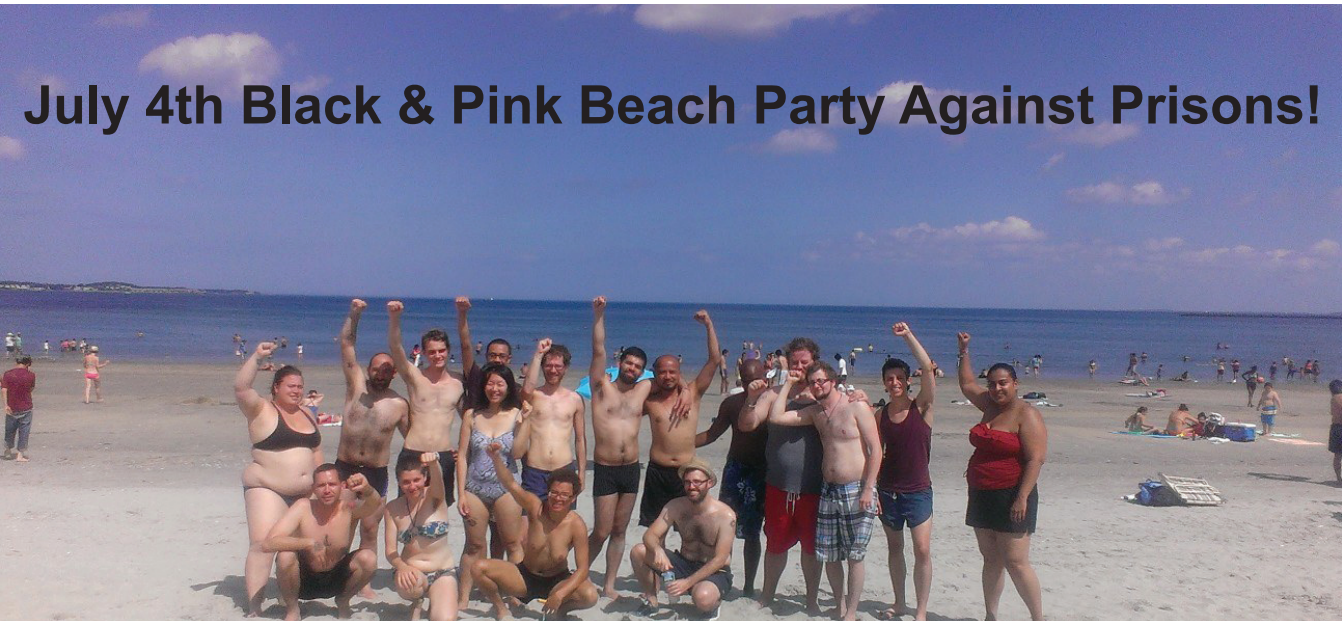
In the United States Black August helps us to remember the Nat Turner Slave Rebellion, the start of the Underground Railroad, the March on Washington, and the Watts Uprising. August also marks the death of Jonathan Jackson, George Jackson’s younger brother, who was killed by the police during an organized attempt to free George Jackson and the other Soledad Brothers from prison. This history is important to know because

it reminds us why we are abolitionists today. The prison industrial complex functions as an extension of chattel slavery and continues to target the lives of Black people. We know that our community of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer people are directly affected and then suffer even greater violence inside the walls. As we remember the strength of the history that we come from may we have the power to fight for justice and liberation today. We keep our work thriving knowing that once there were no prisons, that day will come again.

In loving struggle,
Jason

Leadership Circle Update

The Free World LC made a proposal in the May 2013 Newspaper to change from an elected group of 10 incarcerated people on the Leadership Circle, to instead a vote on each decision by all membership. Jenni, current incarcerated B&P Leadership Circle member in California, expressed concern and lots of disagreement over the proposal. Many people sent in Feedback Forms in favor of the change. As we work together to move forward, we will keep the Family Feedback Form as a way to hear thoughts from everyone and “poll” all the membership. And we will keep the decision-making power with the Free World and incarcerated Leadership Circle. We will together look at and try to make the LC work better.



July 4th Black & Pink Beach Party Against Prisons!

Dear Black & Pink,

I must say Thank You to my transgender friend who has shared the great privilege of reading the B&P Newspaper with me the past three months. And I appreciate being held in high esteem as a major part of her support in the pod.

To speak about myself, I grew up back and forth between Colorado and Wyoming in a semi-religious family. A majority of my relatives are Jehovah’s Witnesses, so I frequently attended meetings when I was with them since a young age. Also since a young age, like 6, I knew I was gay, just without knowing what that meant.

I spent from age 7 to about 14 in a small town in Wyoming where I was pretty much a wallflower. This town sucked, it was so behind the times and everyone was stuck on crappy Top 40 tunes. I was the only one rockin’ to Megadeth or Disturbed. Plus, I felt so alone, I thought I was the only one who was gay.

At about 14, I was sent to a youth treatment home where I fell in love with “JT.” He was the first boy I came out to and he was very, very receptive to me. He became my first boyfriend and lover. At 15, I moved to Colorado with my Dad, where I had people who actually understood variety. I could be me finally and it felt so good.

At this point, I was in and out of metal bands as a musician and vocalist. I must say, I’m not the stereotypical queer. I used my status as a way to be promiscuous and I also used my orientation as a form of rebellion. I was this way ‘till I was 18 and to be honest, I’m fortunate I never contracted anything. At this point I’m continuously in and out of trouble and abusing drugs and alcohol.

When I got out of jail my first time I met and married the man of my dreams. We were together for about seven months before he took his own life. This lead to my committing my current offense. In the midst of emotional turmoil, I engaged in an intimate relationship with a minor. I now pay the price for my choice.

Currently I am serving 4-7 years in a medium security facility. I have 3 years in, and 20 months to kill. I may parole soon and I hope for it. Since I have been down, I have always been open about being gay and a S.O. I have earned much respect from fellow inmates all because of how I carry myself. I encourage my brothers and sisters to be true and strong in the face of opposition. Just be who you are. It feels better to be real. The system sucks, but prove to them you are empowered.

I currently participate in a sex offender treatment program and re-entry courses, and that’s about the only good thing Wyoming got right. This place ain’t hell and I haven’t had it as bad as some, but I have had some crappy experiences in this corrupt system. So keep your heads up and I extend my rainbow powered love!

Truly,
Joey, Wyoming

Greetings to all at Black & Pink!

I am happy to say I can start receiving delivery of this wonderful Newspaper again. Where I had been housed, the prison guards were reading my mail and “outing me” to the inmate general population. This happened after the change from a simple sheaf of xeroxed pages containing the most incredible and thought provoking information to the NewsPAPER, which is not protected by an envelope and allows unwelcome reading by persons not intended access. But I was moved, as overnight I “developed” a “confidential enemy.” This move has been a God-send, and although there are still no other out LGBT people on this yard, my mail is handled in accordance to the law & procedure.

In other issues, I noticed several letters all affirming and encouraging us all to be, stay, and celebrate our individuality! I am a student of Theology. I graduated from Southern California Bible College. I then completed my post-graduate studies and Seminary at College of the Pines Seminary School. And although we are constantly bombarded with speeches and accusations and threats of “living in sin” due to our lifestyle, I am here to clear the air, and bring the truthful news.

Before I go any further, let me explain something about religion and the Bible. The Bible in its form we in the Western world know is not the complete version. Some books were removed, and the chronological order was changed. Ancient languages cannot be interpreted word for word and the “authorized” King James version of the Bible is probably the worst translation ever, since only 5,500 English words were used to translate 4 very different languages: ancient Hebrew, contemporary Hebrew, Aramaic, & Greek.

I began to see the “human” aspect” begin to infiltrate the WAY the Bible (and religion in general) is taught. For example, when the Bible speaks of “men knowing men,” like a man knows a woman, it not speaking specifically about having casual sex. It is speaking specifically about the use of sex in the Pagan religious services. The preacher and congregation would have sex as part of worship to Baal, with prostitutes both female and male, and the male temple prostitutes were known as Sodomites. No place in Biblical text is a gay relationship cited as condemnation, only in religious interpretation.

But the quotes from the Bible are God’s words. The Bible does tell us that “we are intricately and selectively stitched together by the Hand of God Himself,” and continually states “God is perfect, God is without sin, God is never late, never early, always on time. And God loves you!” God is perfect, He made you in His perfect way. He made you perfectly the way you are! It is society that has placed their guilt trip beliefs on you (on us all) to try to beat us down and steal our joy. Brothers, Sisters, those in between, all people whom do not fit into a cookie cutter form- God made us as individual as Godly possible! Enjoy, celebrate, and share your happiness with those whom would try to steal it from you. Pity them, feel sorry for them, and be kind to them. The human form of God, Jesus, gave his life for us, and said on the cross “Father forgive them, they know not what they do”! We as members of our GLBT society can show the same righteous, mature, and tolerant attitudes.

Brothers, Sisters, Whomever is reading this; I love you all closer than my own blood family, because we are the truly blessed creatures of God. Please do not listen to these self-edifying false prophets of the false god come to you disguised as our Lord of Hosts and condemn you. Remember what Jesus said to those who “caught” the adulterer- “Let him with no sins, throw the first stone.” We still can either hear those stones dropping to the ground, or feel them in our hands, and you can’t shake hands, or hug people, while holding onto rocks! I love you all so dearly and look forward to any and all correspondence in this matter and other love letters...

Your servant brother,
bucky, California

Is it Taboo to be Black and Gay? Why is it Okay to be Labeled Down Low Instead?

Recently, I began looking at information on social injustice and lack of support for black gays and black transwomen, and I noticed a stark grim pattern. Not only is the local law enforcement not doing enough to protect, because they are part of the problem, but the black gay community is not supported nor backed by the Afrikan community. The reason I believe for the lack of support is the notion in the African community of not going outside for help or airing out your issues.

That is one of the reasons why being gay in the Afrikan community is not widely accepted, and why a lot of our gay men & women remain in the closet. You have to understand what I call the “urban” mindset. I am a product of the urban mindset, where gay was not tolerated on no level. You better not have said you were gay, or you might have gotten your head bashed in. It was/still is accepted to a degree for women to be lesbian because it fits the “menage a trois” fantasy of many straight men (and not the all-male menage a trois that I love).

With the ‘80’s ushering in drugs and gangs the urban landscape changed dramatically. This oppressed community began to turn on itself, with the destructive nature of the gang as well as the drug economic structure, people using any and every means to get out of their current conditions. They did not need no “sissy,” “fag,” or punk running around happy and free, so gays were oppressed very harsh. The gang lifestyle forced a lot of gays into the closet, fearing the violence would turn on them. Some found comfort in the prison complex for a very short while. We use to hear the stories of our fathers, uncles, or cousins going to jail and while in there, he started messing around with “them boys.” I didn’t quite understand what that meant. But as soon as they got out, it was business as usual. One thing that I’ve noticed though is I had a lot of “gay uncles or cousins” whom were not actual kin folks.

The Afrikan community was on a very hostile campaign against its gays. In the white community, where there’s more resources, it’s easier to find a place to be accepted if you are gay, bi, or lesbian, because programs were set up to better assist and promote understanding, and a new demographic gained a stronger and stronger voice each day. Now compare that to the black gay community where it was being further silenced.

One of the reasons why I’m approaching this hot bed topic is to shed light on our dirty little secret. You see when I started my prison bid in ‘94, this was the first time for me being in prison with the possibility for the rest of my natural life. Brotha’s I knew in the street game made their position very clear, a position they began imprinting in my head. “Boy, you betta get you a big butt boy and make your time comfortable and forget these prison politics.” That was the recruitment message I received. See often drug dealers and gang members did not classify f***ing another man as gay because they weren’t getting f****ed. Really? Their wives and girlfriends didn’t know. This is where the dilemma was created.

Many d-boys and gang members would get out continuing their “Down low” lifestyle, going to the gay clubs and gay hoe strolls, picking up these men and re-capturing a moment they experienced in jail but they are still pushing this “I’m not gay” mentality sh**. Why? Simple. They did not want the G’s and Y’s to know that they are gay because of the earlier campaign against gays.

Now let’s look at our transwomen. This will make sense to show you why the Afrikan community finds our transwomen un-desireable, which is a damn shame. *Continued on page 8*

Literary Documentary: Prerequisites to KOKUMO (This One Will Not Die)

By KOKUMO, reprinted with author’s permission, <http://kokumomedia.com>, July 14, 2013
ATTENTION WORLD:

I, LOVE, BLACK* MEN.

From the drug dealers, heart surgeons, stuck at rock bottom, ten years sober, servin’ a dime to life, ex-con turned youth-minister, trans*, gay, D.L., paraplegic, Olympic gold-medal winnin’, current U.S. presidency presidin’, illiterate, artistic, broke as a joke, ballin’, dark-skindid, light-skindid, country-bama, Brooklyn-bred, OG, GD, Rasta bombaclot, to the European transplant and etc.

And no matter how many Jim Crow laws you revise, nothin’ can change that. I grew up with black* men. I’ve fought with black* men. And black* men have fought, for me. Hell, I was supposed to be, a black*, man. I’ve been insulted by black* men. I’ve been consoled by black* men. I’ve been schooled, had my socks knocked off, and mind blown by black* men. I’ve loved black* men, and had the privilege of having them love me back.

Therefore I KNOW BETTER. Black* men are human. They come complete with contributions as well as flaws. And black* men have a seemingly generational immortal dream to live. Therefore I KNOW BETTER than to believe you when say they deserve to die. Therefore I KNOW BETTER than to believe your propaganda. Therefore, I won’t.


ATTENTION BLACK MEN:

Black* transwoman to black* cis/trans* man. I revere and respect you for living brave in a world that hunts you with hypocritical indignation. I thank you for living in the body I couldn’t and doing it with such swag, intellect, and a vengeance.

As a black* transwoman I won’t you to know that I never abandoned you or took the easy way out. A war was waged on black* bodies the moment the first slave touched Virginian soil in the 1600’s. So I transitioned from “male” to “female” because I just needed to be in more comfortable battle fatigues.

ATTENTION BLACK* COMMUNITIES:

Trayvon Martin was my little brother, Emmitt Till, my North Carolina sharecropper forefathers, and me before I transitioned. Young, black&, male-bodied, and trying to figure out why my body owes the world an apology. Black* communities across the world, please hear me. Before I knew what trans* meant, I knew how black* felt. Non-LGBT black* people I beg of you. Discard your fear and join forces with your LGBT black* siblings. Because everyday we lose more and more of our sons. Ase.



KOKUMO Magazine is a green (digital) lifestyle and culture magazine dedicated to African-American transmasculine, transfeminine and transqueer communities released by KOKUMOPUBLISHING, a subsidiary of KOKUMOMEDIA INC. KOKUMOMEDIA INC. is a black, trans multimedia production using music, film, literature, and philanthropy to illuminate the TGI (Trans*, Gender Non-Conforming, Intersex Freedom) experience of color. This is a Literary Documentary chronicling our journey to the Spring 2014 release of KOKUMO Magazine exclusively via KOKUMOMEDIA.COM. And I thank you for taking this journey with us.*



Greetings to all of my Brothers and Sisters,

It don’t matter who you are, it shouldn’t be a condition on my best wishes. I hope a time comes in which we may all grow and transcend. Freedom is within, and strength is in a Power greater than ourselves. Find your drive and rise... I love and appreciate all of you in a way that words become too vulgar to express...my gratitude for this Newspaper, this forum...this voice of hope and strength.

My name is Yeniel, I’m a transgender man preparing to be released from a female Florida prison. I am homeless and a proud recovering addict. I’m facing many years of community control and probation that were designed for my return into this system, but I got a few tricks too.

When I arrived here I had to battle for my Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), testosterone. I was overdosed, then under-dosed, and then given what I believe to be a placebo. I have used my greatest weapon, the pen. And finally got somewhere with the help of my friends on the outside, Lamda Legal, and Florida Institutional Legal Services (Cassandra Capobianco).

Because of the prison’s deliberate indifference I suffered stressful emotional and physical ups and downs due to the malpractice. I even experienced a menstruation for 3 months straight. When I complained, they demanded to search me and do an inspection of my body. This made me feel violated. I’ve been accosted by almost every staff member, even the Assistant Warden, and been kicked out of the chapel because I have no religion noted on my computer file. I know these issues are minimal compared to the many I’ve read about in the amazing Newspaper, but they are real and damaging.

I want to say that we are not alone, and we all share not just hope and strength, but also a responsibility. A responsibility to be better to ourselves, to educate ourselves and others. To steer clear of the negativity, and when we can’t, to remember we are not alone, and if we stay strong and united... this too shall pass. I believe in us. I believe in my Higher Power’s perfect justice and love and I know we can achieve everything we put our hearts to. The heart is amazing, and transgenders too have kind hearts that never stop beating, giving, looking for the better in everything. Keep pushing, keep dreaming, never become the same thing that oppresses you, always be better, always stay open, don’t be afraid to be yourself, the real you. At the end it’s clear that only what makes you can break you, and none of them did. Smile because your smile is like the sun, and shine because your fire lights a path. Stay alive, stay yourself, and only compromise for the better, for the good.

May peace be with you all.
-Yeniel, Florida

That Feeling

As I walked in the rain
The feeling of being invisible
The feeling of being
And not being at all
I’ve felt it before
And I don’t want to feel it again
That feeling
Of things falling to the floor
Not breaking
But disappearing completely
Like a bunch of steam
And melting frost
That feeling
Of disappointment and distrust
That can engulf and ruin
everything
I’ve felt it before
And I don’t want it anymore

Yeniel, Florida

Editor’s note: Yeniel and his girlfriend wrote us to say that he was just released! Welcome back to the free-world, Yeniel! We are excited to have you remain active in Black & Pink!

Chicago House opens nation’s first transgender housing

by GoPride.com News Staff

Mon. July 15, 2013 Chicago, IL — On Monday, Chicago House cut the ribbon on the TransLife Center (TLC), a first in the nation facility for members of the transgender community, located in Chicago’s Edgewater neighborhood. The non-profit organization said it hopes to offer full wrap-around services to members of Chicago’s transgender community, which includes housing, health and employment servicecs, in a discrimination-free space. “This will set a new model and a new standard for other cities,” said Chicago House CEO, Rev. Stan J. Sloan during the morning ceremony. The ribbon was cut by Stormie Williams, the first resident of the house, which includes nine bedrooms. Transgender Hollywood producer and Chicago native Lana Wachowski (The Matrix, V for Vendetta, Cloud Atlas) was joined by Mara Keisling, executive director of the National Center for Transgender Equality for the ceremony held outside the new facility. A number of other dignitaries and elected officials also attended [...].

Located in a former AIDS hospice operated by Chicago House, TLC’s exact location is being kept private to protect its occupants.

Struggling for Rights!

Dear Black & Pink,

Let me congratulate you on the Newspaper! Well, my name is Stretch and I'm an inmate in Pennsylvania and want to bring attention to some incidents here that occurred within a 3 month period. There were three suicides here between Nov '12 and Jan '13. One inmate supposedly hung himself from his vent, but there were inmates who had a clear view of the cell. It was said not only did staff let him die, but they made no attempt to try to bring him back. It was said no CPR was done until medical arrived and when they checked for a pulse and found none, even they didn't do anything to try and save him! And then 2 other inmates overdosed about a month apart but only one was saved, and the other was left like the first inmate! But here's what's really disturbing- when the first one supposedly took his own life, he was seen by Psychology on 3 different suicide attempts prior to this incident and was never placed under observation for these attempts. And yet no whistle has been blown concerning these incidents!

I've been in this PA system since '98, (I max out December of this year), and I know the staff train periodically for CPR, cell extractions, riots, and even weapons training. At this prison you can actually hear them on the shooting range with their assault rifles, .38's, and shotguns everyday during yard. But when an inmate needs emergency assistance the officers refused to perform CPR on us human beings who are here for mistakes all of us made. We just got caught, and that's the only difference between con, inmate, and guards, who would be out of work if it wasn't for us! And they bring their problems to work and target inmates who they know are coming up for parole, on psych meds, or on the Special Needs Unit (SNU). Any chance the staff can get away with it, they have been known to put inmates of different races in cells together even though there are instructions in some inmate's files that say "white with white," or "African-American with African-American," due to their crimes, or even in some cases gang affiliations or are considered high risk for violence.

I want all of those of the Black & Pink family to know that this goes on across the state of PA and other states as well. No matter who the victim is, they have feelings and are human too, no matter what kind of a uniform you wear! I was taught not to hate or judge anybody based on their race, creed, faith, etc. I've met a lot of really thorough people in prison and lost a lot of them too! So I only judge people by their actions. If you don't separate yourself from those who only want you to fail, instead of those who go out of their way to help you succeed, then you will fail about 99% of the time. I know, I used to be a crash dummy! And it took me 2 years of doing time and a lot of soul searching. In a nutshell if you take a single arrow you can break it, but if you take more than one they are always whole.

We should get rid of prisons by setting up a Bill that makes those who make millions off of prisons pay for all the expenses, and hurt their pockets.

Go with the Gods, In Solidarity,
Stretch, Pennsylvania

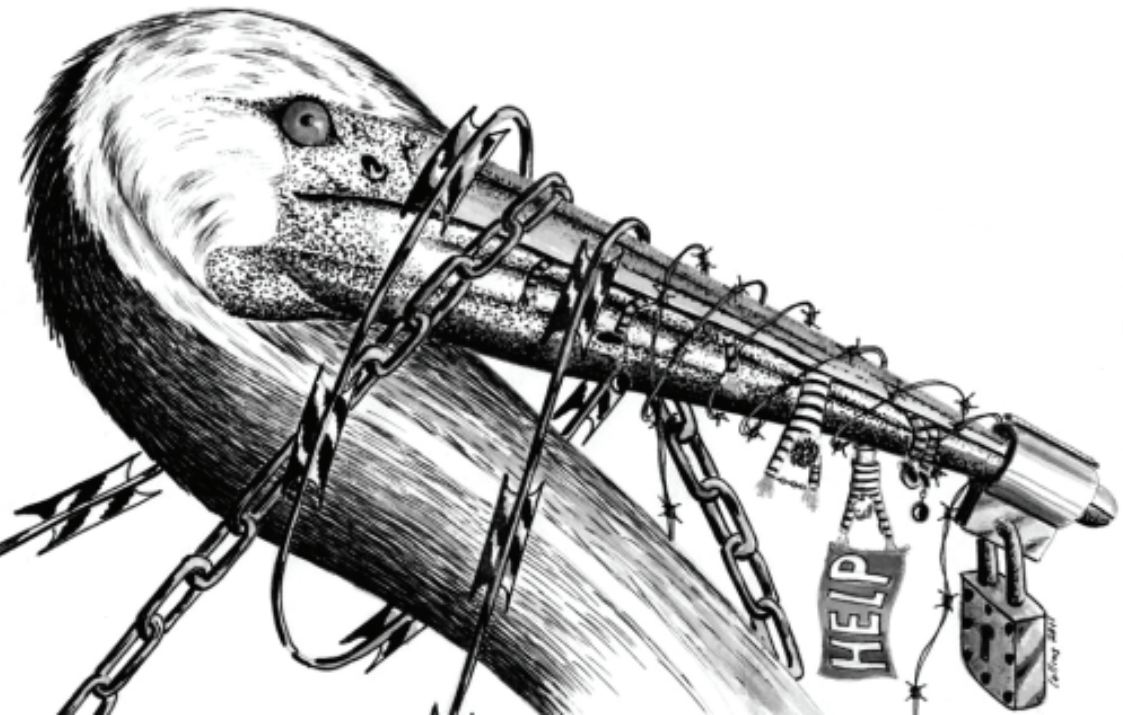
Dear Black & Pink,

I'd like to say Hi to all my brothers and sisters. You got to stand tall, holding your head up like a soldier when you behind bars.

I wrote a letter to someone in the state Senate saying the state wouldn't have to waste money on prisons if the Governor let people out and the Attorney General prosecutes the crimes including those by staff in the DOC. The DOC is quick to press charges on inmates even when they know they wrong, but I say we stand up and fight and flood the judicial system with civil rights complaints and more showing them something needs to be done. If not, the correctional institutions are going to continue to do what they do, and education will get cut to build more prisons.

Know there will be battles and trials but you got to stand strong not letting these pigs get the best of you. When they come at you, go back at them hard, don't sell your soul short to these people. You can't let them bring you down when these people do something that against policy- file paperwork. They'll try to tamper with the evidence and get you booked, but continue to fight harder. Always have a plan, don't let them scare you. When they come, stand tall and strong letting them know you still standing and going to continue standing until you die.

-Juicy, Pennsylvania



Oakland, July 23, 2013 — With the California prisoner hunger strike in its 3rd week, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) and medical receiver officials agreed to meet with a mediation team working on behalf of the hunger strikers. While the mediators were hopeful that the CDCR would discuss negotiations around the strikers' demands, they were quickly disappointed and dismayed by the CDCR's conduct. "The CDCR refused to let family members of strikers who are part of our team join in the discussions, they refused to negotiate or even address the strikers' five demands, and they failed in any way to appreciate the urgency of this situation," said mediator Ron Ahnen. The mediation team's meeting with the federal health receiver's office overseeing the California prison system left some assurances that the strikers would receive due medical care and left open prospects for future communication and discussions. "This is a matter of life and death for both the strikers and their families," said mediator Barbara Becnel. "We object in the strongest possible terms to the complacency of the CDCR." Mediators have urged CDCR Secretary Beard to meet with them as soon as possible. His office has yet to respond. Meanwhile strikers being held in Administrative Segregation at Pelican Bay Prison are reported to be feeling strong and in high spirits. They issued a statement today, which reads:

Greetings of solidarity and respect to all of our supporters, all people of conscience around the world, and all similarly situated prisoners. You should know that once again our peaceful protest is making history, bringing international attention to our collective efforts to bring an end, once and for all, to the inhumane conditions and torture of indefinite solitary confinement.

We are being tortured each day by state officials (Governor Brown, his appointee CDCR Secretary Beard, and all his underlings). Increased retaliation has been perpetuated upon defenseless and starving prisoners who only seek what any human being strives for—humane treatment, dignity, equality, and justice for our families, loved ones, and ourselves. These are the fundamental rights of all people, including those incarcerated by the state. We are doing all we can, together with our outside supporters, to bring about a positive changes. Gov. Brown is not above the will of the people of California, and if he refuses to recognize the legitimacy of our human and civil rights struggle against the practices of this prison system, then it is the responsibility of the federal government and President Obama to use their powers to stop the harm being done to thousands of prisoners being held in solitary confinement.

CDCR officials are attempting to undermine the voluntary actions of prisoners who truly want better treatment and living conditions by wrongfully accusing us of forcing tens-of-thousands of prisoners across California, along with our supporters in the free world, to participate in our protest. Prisoners across the state are participating because of the inhumane conditions they are being subjected to. As HUMAN BEINGS prisoners are collectively resisting such treatment, and they are doing so peacefully. The attempted repression of our protest has not broken our spirits. In fact it has only helped to strengthen each of us—individually and collectively. Despite CDCR's retaliations and propaganda, we remain steadfast in our commitment. We will see our peaceful hunger strike through to victory, even if this requires us to endure the torture of force-feeding. We believe at this point in our struggle we are prepared to do what is necessary in order for Gov. Brown and the CDCR to realize how serious we are, and how far and long we are willing to go to have our reasonable demands implemented.

We are hopeful that all those brave men and women across the state who are participating in this strike—all who are able health-wise—will be encouraged to issue public statements of their own, via media outlets across the country, letting the world know why they have taken part in this historic, collective struggle.

In closing, we want to inform the world that this hunger strike is far from over. We are in it for the long haul. Thus, we strongly urge Gov. Brown to return from his "get-away" vacation overseas and deal urgently with this crisis before more prisoners suffer serious health damage or death. If any deaths do occur, the responsibility for them will fall squarely on Brown and the CDCR in their callousness and inaction. We believe that we will prevail.

prisonerhungerstrikesolidarity.wordpress.com

Poetry from the Heart

Your brother
With respect and love
Watched over
By God above

Confused
No longer free
Be careful
Don't end up like me

Heart broken
Tears fill my eyes
Tell me
Is it a surprise

Mentally ill
Maybe I am
Holding on
In a life long jam

Who can I turn to
Who will hear me out
Must I continue
To constantly pout

Cast aside
For endless years
Is there no hope
Why does no one hear

So awful far
Away from home
No one will take my hand
So I am alone

Searching
Both day and night
Continuously trying
To make life right

You are near
Yet miles away
Tell me please
How to properly pray

A White Muslim
Hated by many
A fair chance
For me there is not any

Caged
24 hours each day
Can you please
Tell me the right way

What must I do
To make you understand
That I am rehabilitated
Today a new man

I will not give in
Will never forget
Society calls me
Improperly fit

Gay
My sexual choice
Hear me
Listen to my voice

For today
I will say goodbye
Search yourself
For the reason why

Until next time
I will end here
I love you
Please stand near

With all my love,
The fight never ends,
Your Gay Brother,
Chuck

I Want Her (But I'm Shy)

I seen her,
I smelt her
Inside my heart
I had to know her

To hold her,
To kiss her
To forever be
In love with her

I want her,
I need her
But respectfully
I'll wait for her

To feel her,
To taste her
Once I'm done
Being shy to her

-Shy-Shy, California

Shakedown & More

Silver is missing
From the messhall;
All

Prisoners suspect.
Cells torn open
Like wounds

Setting out
In search of
The germ,

The spoon stolen,
Each frisked
As he returns

To his cell.
Shakedown for
Contraband.

All known hands
Are checked
For shivs.

One lives in
Terror that it's
Not marked

For him. Still
It may be found
As a ring on

Newly wedded hand
Or as a worse attack
A knife in the back.

-Paul Mariah (1937-1996)

Soon after Paul Mariah arrived in the San Francisco Bay Area from an Illinois prison in 1966, he became a leading figure in gay literature. In his writings, lectures, and poetry readings, Mariah continually struggled for recognition of the rights of both gays and prisoners.

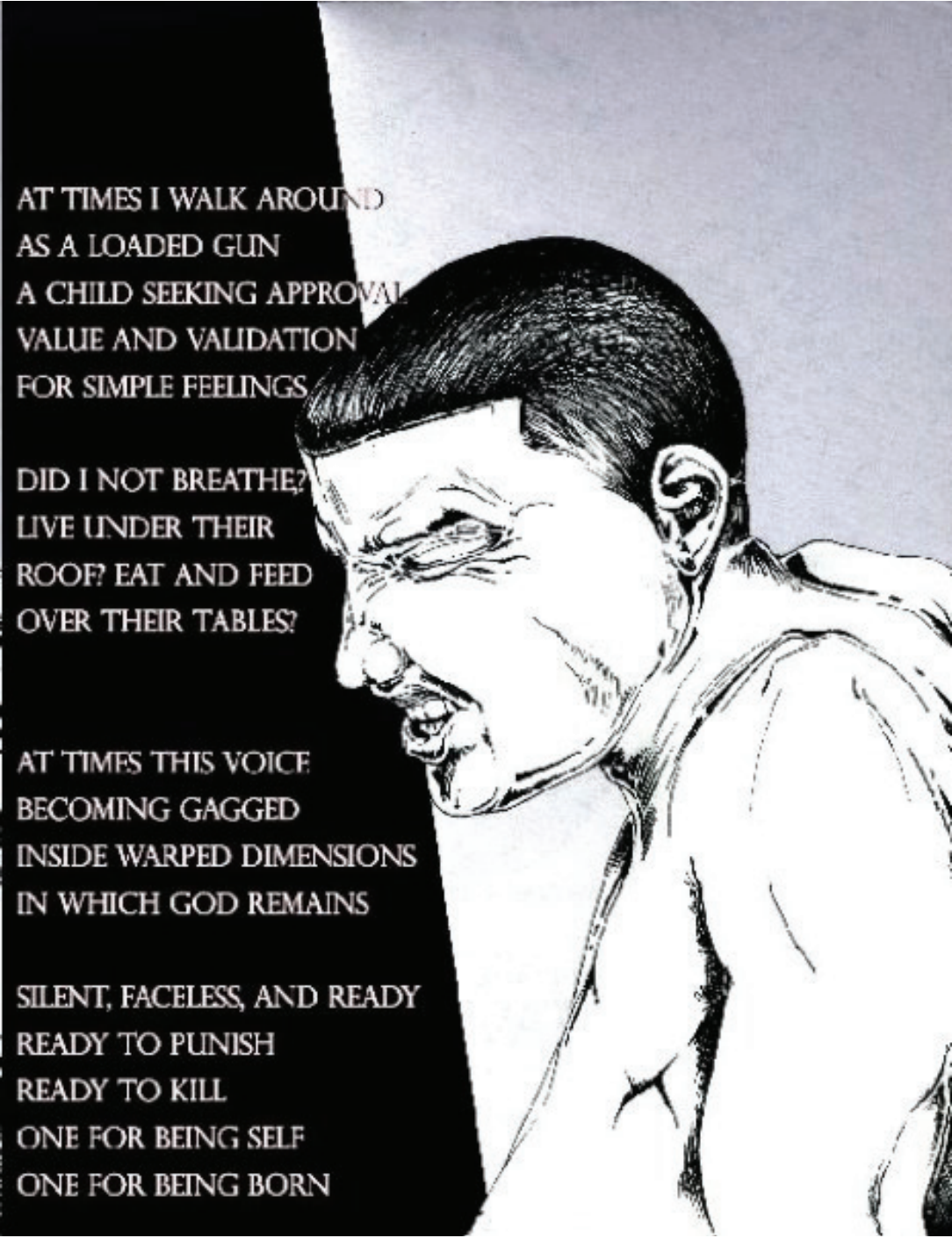
The Promise

Though my love for you flows so Divine,
I can't believe that I left you behind
For I know the promise that I made to you
That I'd never leave you,
Nor let you go through
So let go of the things that will only bring you down in time
And cling to my love, that is one of a kind
This is what I pray each day
That soon we'll be together
So that our love will not fade
So, just remember, the promise I made!

Burdensome

Understanding painted a clear picture
My third eye wasn't closed and I seen the oppression
A lack of love in this concrete jungle
That redefined the meaning of recession
It placed me in a deep depression
But I overstand this self hate
I manifested a clear picture so others could relate
Don't judge me selfishly
If you judge me, judge me wisely
No judgment is needed
But if you judge it wouldn't surprise me
We need atonement
We need to stay focused
We need to separate the real from the fake
Because all the B.S. is bogus

-Hakin, Virginia
What I strive for is what I live for- the LGBT community
in prison and out of prison must learn to continue to pull
together and fight. We are all in the same struggle.



Artwork by Yeniel, FL

Artwork Form & Family Feedback!

New! On the Inside Artwork Form

Based on positive feedback from 25 prisoner members (via a feedback slip in the May newspaper) and thorough input from the free-world leadership circle, Black & Pink is going forward with facilitating the revival of the art program in a new way, called *On the Inside*! If you are an artist, here's how it will work. Some of the artwork will be accepted for an upcoming exhibit; the artist will be promptly compensated \$50 for all accepted artwork (except \$10 for cards) and postage expenses incurred. Any artwork that doesn't meet the criteria of the exhibit for any reason will be promptly returned to the artist. If your artwork is accepted for the Exhibition, you assign all right, title and interest in the work to us (in other words you transfer ownership of the art and its copyrights to the Exhibit coordinators) as consideration for participation in the show. The artwork will never be resold, and will likely be donated to an LGBTQ Archive in years to come. Please do not write your name and number anywhere on the front of the artwork to protect your privacy. We are all excited to see what you create!

rip slip here

Please fill out a separate slip like this for each piece of artwork you submit. You are welcome to use additional pieces of paper.

1)Your preferred name for the exhibit:

2)Your gender pronouns (eg. she / he / xe / they):

3)How do you identify? (Optional: gender, sexuality, race, age)

4)Your legal name, number, and mailing address:

5)If my artwork is not accepted for the exhibit: Send it to my address Send it to the address below Black & Pink can keep it and display it

Address for returned art:

6)Preferred method of compensation:

Donation into commissary account (Please include deposit slips or instructions):

Magazines/books (Details):

Other:

7)Description of artwork (for display at exhibit):

7)Anything else you'd like the exhibit curator to know about the artwork or about yourself which can be shared(feel free to expand on another page):

8) I, (Name), give On the Inside permission for my artwork to be exhibited in person, press, catalogues, internet, etc.

Sign: Date:

Please mail the artwork, with a slip (or piece of paper with information) to:
On the Inside, PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. , Los Angeles, CA 90039

Black & Pink Incarcerated Family Feedback! Topic: Recent Court Rulings

So far, we have received **45 responses** via our family feedback from last month's newspaper!! We'll gather more and report on those findings next month. Remember, we consider all of the feedback that we receive--your ideas and opinions could make a difference for the benefit of fellow family members! This month's family feedback questions are a little different conceptually than the previous few months'. Given that there have been a handful of important court rulings recently that we've reported on Page 1 and 2, we're curious what our members think. Do you agree and are celebrating? Are you disgusted and raging? Think the whole thing was a waste of time? Think the (in)justice system is a sham? We'd like to get to know our members' opinions better. Some of the thoughts mailed in will be excerpted for the newspaper next month!

rip slip here

PLEASE MAIL THIS SLIP SOON TO BLACK AND PINK-FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPATE! Feel free to write more on a separate page.

1) What do you think about Fisher v. University of Texas at Austin (June 24) [AKA Affirmative Action Ruling]?

2) What do you think about Adoptive Couple v. Baby Girl (June 25) [AKA Native Sovereignty Ruling]?

3) What do you think about Shelby County v. Holder (June 25) [AKA Voting Rights Act Ruling]?

4) What do you think about United States v. Windsor [AKA Repeal of DOMA, Defense of Marriage Act] ?

5) What do you think about the recent Florida trial verdict (Not Guilty) for George Zimmerman's murder of Trayvon Martin?

Continued from Page 3 Understand, transsexuals were my first experience and I literally fell in love with the whole idea of what a transwomen represented. My sistas caught it worse, because in prison they have so-and-so promising them the world, but once they get out they are rejected by so-and-so when they go to their ‘hood looking for them. They may be forced back into the streets and prostitution with the risk of being killed, and the whole time so-and-so from prison turned his back on her. She may try to go home, and may be rejected there, because when she went to prison she was someone’s adorable son, but she is now someone’s adorable sista, daughter, lover, but rejected and neglected.

The piece by WitchyMorgan in the Newspaper only confirms my position. I hate hearing or reading about transwomen of any race being killed, especially black transwomen. My heart bleeds & cries for my sistas who are being killed out there in the streets. The sista who wrote the piece scripted that beautifully and it made me think long and hard.

I had started writing this piece a while back but I found myself in the hole. But not to detract from the issue. Our transwomen don’t have that support out there. They are remembered one way as a male in their old life, and the new beautiful self is ridiculed because the harsh and foul names are spewed her way. No one there to get her back because they do not want to be the target of some ignorant slander. When the attacks are that brutal, the black gay community/organizations don’t want nothing to do with the inner city chaos, and turn their backs on transwomen (see Editor’s Note). If they did give support, many gay black men would not be labeling themselves or their sexual behavior as “down low.” Simply bi, gay, trans or others would suffice, but down low? What exactly is that? That shows you the veil that cloaks the urban gay community.

Blacks do not want to support their gays because ignorance will have you believe that being gay is a disease, that it can be spread if you touch one of us. Blacks feel more ashamed due to the simple fact that their church community would think less of them if they support a fag, but let’s be real about some sh** though. Those hypocrites in those churches ushering up and down the isle taking your money are queer. Believe that. Probably ‘ole Pastor such-and-such is too, so why care about what they think about your son or daughter? We have to educate our communities on what’s labeled homosexuality to show them, just like heteros falling in love, so do we. By standing up and being accounted for, our transwomen would have that support that they need. Their deaths are senseless

Now this gets me back on track. The gay drug dealer and gang member sees the hell that transwomen go through in prison, and quickly abandons any notion of going out there professing his queerness because he just seen what the sista when through, and convinced himself his fate is even worse. His homeboys don’t want to be around a (excuse the term) n**** who was f***ing a guy in prison, so he creeps around way out of town to hide his true nature. You’ll have those that’ll say that it was a phase in his life and no more. Well let me tell you that he’s a liar. How do I know? Because those were my thoughts for a long time.

Until 2008 I did not accept the fact that I was gay because gang members are not suppose to project such emotions. But the fact remained, I was gay, and once I said it out loud, I released myself from the mental hell I was incarcerated in. We still have a long ways to go here in California, ‘cause there are some of my G’s and Y’s that have not yet accepted my reality.

It’s sad when you know who’s gay and they are posing like they are not because that stigma of being gay and black is preventing them from freely expressing themselves. They still believe in that idea that they’ll be rejected by their loved ones. Some will, that’s fact, but like me I took that leap and landed on a solid foundation. I don’t have the disease of down low syndrome. I’m a proud black man in prison and living life to the fullest.

So my question is, why not create a specific organization to educate in the black community about our gay population that’s only getting bigger and our voices and pens are becoming stronger and stronger. Let’s not just talk about, people, let’s be about it 169%. I’m pretty sure there are many out there that have these same views and opinions and who would throw their support behind you ‘cause I know I would. That’s one! So where do we begin?

-James, California

**Editor’s note: In many cities, there is growing awareness about trans issues. Also, each year the annual Transgender Day of Remembrance (TDOR) memorializes individuals who have died throughout the world in the previous year because of anti-transgender hatred. Each November, the worldwide transgender community turns its attention to family, friends and loved ones lost to violence and prejudice. A tradition inspired by the Allston, MA vigil for slain transsexual Rita Hester in 1998, this day has become the worldwide rallying point for a community long under siege.*

Addresses: Please note our new addresses for mail!

	Black & Pink - _____ 614 Columbia Rd Dorchester, MA 02125
If you would like to request:	Please write this in the top line of the address:
Newsletter Subscriptions (Start or Stop)	Black & Pink - Newsletter Subscriptions
Newsletter Submissions (Poems, Art & Stories)	Black & Pink - Newsletter Submissions
“Outside” Free Pen-Pal Request (Please note: Pen-Pal Request Form will be in this newsletter quarterly)	Black & Pink - Pen-Pal
Address Change (Will take a little time to update; at this time, we are mostly unable to send back issues.)	Black & Pink - Address Change
Black & Pink Organization Feedback (especially the slip on Page 7)	Black & Pink - Feedback
Request Erotica	Black & Pink - Erotica
Submit to Erotica Zine	Black & Pink - Gabrielle
Religious Support	Black & Pink - Religion
Volunteering (Send thank you cards to donors, etc.)	Black & Pink - Volunteer
Advocacy Requests (include details about situation and thoughts about how calls or letters might help)	Black & Pink - Advocacy
Art (please fill out the associated slip on page 7 for each piece of artwork, or fill out a piece of paper with the same information)	On the Inside PO Box 173, 2658 Griffith Park Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90039

LEGAL: Consider writing to Lambda Legal for support or referrals with legal issues that you are having. “Lambda Legal is a national organization committed to achieving full recognition of the civil rights of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, transgender people and those with HIV through impact litigation, education and public policy work.” Lambda Legal, National Office 120 Wall Street, Suite 1500, New York, NY 10005, 212-809-8585

Assistance with legal research for everyone, and preparing for disciplinary and parole hearings *only* for people in Massachusetts. Hotline (9am-5pm EST): 617-495-3127
By mail: Prison Legal Assistance Project, 6 Everett Street, Suite 5107, Harvard Law School, Cambridge, MA 02138

Another resource to turn to, if you can afford the subscription (\$24 yearly, payable with new stamps), is Prison Legal News. This resource was co-started by a former gay prisoner and Men Against Sexism organizer, Ed Mead, though now it is run by Paul Wright. You can reach them by writing to: Prison Legal News, P.O. Box 2420, West Brattleboro, VT 05303

SURVIVORS: Just Detention International provides support for prisoners who are survivors of sexual abuse. Write them at the legal address below for a packet. Each packet includes an introductory letter, a list of local resources, fact sheets, publications about recovery from sexual abuse, and a letter of hope from another survivor.
Ms. Chris Daley, Esq., 3325 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 340, Los Angeles, CA 90010